from Central Relief Fund (CRF), National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF), Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) and Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). States were advised to immediately avail the assistance being provided under 5% of the allocated funds under ARWSP to meet the contingency arising out of the natural calamities and other emergent situations. Geological Survey of India and Ministry of Petroleum have agreed to consider the request from drought-affected States to provide their expertise and drilling rigs to the State Governments. Drought-affected States are provided assistance under CRF, to which Central & State Government concerned contribute in the ratio of 3 :1. In addition assistance is considered from the NCCF for natural calamities of severe nature in accordance with a set procedure. To help the State Governments in their efforts to harness the water from natural resources and accelerate the creation of irrigation potential by early completion of ongoing schemes, Government of India have launched Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) since 1996-97. States have also been advised to take over the exploratory wells drilled by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) for enhancing their water supply. Government of India is also promoting rain water harvesting through water shed management programme, artificial recharge of ground water and roof top rain water harvesting under the sector reform project of ARWSP of Ministry of Rural Development for which technical and financial assistance is provided to the State Governments and other implementing agencies.

Baglihar Hydro-power Project

3379. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY :
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether talks between India and Pakistan held in early February, 2003 regarding Islamabad's reservations about the design of the 450 MW Baglihar Hydro-electric Power Project on river Chenab in Kashmir, have ended in a deadlock;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Pakistan has decided to invite a "neutral expert" to resolve the issue; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the 88th meeting of Permanent Indus Commission, held at Islamabad during 4th–6th February, 2003, Pakistan Commissioner insisted on discussing the questions framed by Pakistan on the Baglihar Hydro-electric Plant under the provision of the Treaty dealing with settlement of differences and disputes, which *inter-alia* also provides for the appointment of a Neutral Expert. The Indian Commissioner was, however, of the view that stage had not yet reached to discuss the issue under that provision of the Treaty. The Indian Commissioner, during the meeting suggested to discuss Pakistan's objections on the design of the Plant so as to resolve them amicably. The meeting concluded with both sides maintaining their respective points of view.

(c) The decision of Pakistan regarding the appointment of a Neutral Expert has not been communicated to India so far.

(d) Does not arise.

Completion of Polavaram Project

3380. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA :
SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State of Andhra Pradesh requested to help in completion of Polavaram Multi-purpose Project;

(b) whether a suggestion has been made to entrust this work to a private agency;

(c) whether on completion of this project people of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh will be greatly helped; and

(d) if so, the case of delay in completion of this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a), (b) and (d) The Polavaram Multipurpose Project of Government of Andhra Pradesh has not yet been cleared for investment clearance for want of resolution of inter-State issues and submission of remaining chapters of the detailed Project Report by the State Government for techno-economic appraisal by the Central appraising agencies. Irrigation being a State subject, the